

THE PLAN

A Vision for New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park¹

New Bedford was the international capital for whaling in the mid-19th century. This city is therefore the best location to tell the story of American whaling and the human themes embraced within it.

Visitors to New Bedford will find:

- A fun, exciting, and dynamic place that tells the story of the people and places both near and far that played a role in the evolution of whaling.
- Visitors of all ages and backgrounds will enjoy the character of New Bedford's historic areas and learn more about them through entertaining and enlightening programs and activities.
- A lively and invigorated working waterfront that is connected to the park and is a backdrop for telling the stories of those who chose a life at sea and those who stayed behind.
- A vibrant and inclusive network of people and cultural and educational institutions that are actively involved in a continuous collaboration to ensure that resources are protected and stories are told, so that future generations understand and appreciate the role of whaling and the sea in New Bedford's past, and their own connection to it.

Concept

This general management plan is built around the concept that the National Park Service will share responsibility with its partners for protecting the park's historic resources and offering effective programming to the visiting public. The National Park

Service will bring the story of New Bedford and American whaling to a national audience. Public education, interpretation, research, and technical training aimed at generating understanding and fostering greater resource stewardship will be emphasized through National Park Service activities.

Visitor Experience Areas

Sometimes referred to as management zones, the areas identified in the following sections possess different characteristics, represent a range of possible visitor experiences, and have different implications for management and public use. The identification of management zones is required by agency-wide policies guiding park planning. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park encompasses four visitor experience areas.

The Contemporary Waterfront/Maritime Area

The contemporary waterfront/maritime area is the primary area where visitors learn about the contemporary fishing industry, life at sea, and maritime arts. In the contemporary waterfront/maritime area, the visitor has the opportunity to observe the "real thing"—industrial waterfront activity ranging from small ferry activity and the comings and goings of the schooner Ernestina and other tall ships, to the unloading of cargo and maintenance of the fishing fleet. Here visitors will have fewer encounters with other visitors than in the historic district/commercial area. The visitor experience on the waterfront is multi-sensory, encompassing sounds, smells, and climate as well as sights. There is great potential for participation in historic and cultural demonstrations

and hands-on experiences. Finally, this area is a venue for large-scale concerts and community events, including waterfront celebrations.

Currently, on most visitor days the area is likely to be populated by those involved in waterfront activities and industry. Concerns have been raised about the possibility of user conflicts between those engaged in waterfront industrial activity and the visiting public. Although this type of conflict has yet to appear, it is possible that as visitation to the waterfront increases conflicts will become more evident. The National Park Service will work with the city of New Bedford, representatives of waterfront industries, and the academic community to arrive at an appropriate method to monitor such conflicts and find ways to mitigate them.

This area could easily absorb crowds during special event days. In fact, it currently serves as a venue for “SummerFest” during the July Fourth weekend and other large-scale, city-sponsored events. Working with its cosponsors, the city takes responsibility for ensuring that traffic flow and parking, sanitary facilities (port-a-johns and trash barrels), and additional law enforcement needs are all addressed during large-scale special events.

The Historic District/Commercial Area

The historic district/commercial area is the primary place where visitors learn about the history of whaling as an industry. Here the visitor will have a variety of activities from which to choose. There are ample opportunities for viewing historic structures; self-guiding learning (via interpretive waysides, brochures, and guidebooks); participating in guided tours; visiting museums; attending small-scale

events including concerts, lectures, and films—both indoors and outdoors; and shopping and dining. This area is best explored on foot. On an ordinary day, visitors to this area are much more likely to encounter more visitors than on the waterfront. Visitors also encounter more “city sounds”—traffic, radios, sirens, and conversation.

Currently, during most visitor days the historic district appears to be quiet and somewhat underpopulated. Historically, this area experienced all of the intensive activity associated with an active commercial district and port. This area could support a much larger volume of foot traffic and activity and currently does so during festival weekends and other special events. However, increased congestion associated with vehicular traffic through the district would not be a welcome addition.

The various institutions within the area (the New Bedford Whaling Museum, for example) currently address carrying capacity by referring to local fire codes for public buildings. When presented with large groups, such as bus tours, each institution has an established procedure for ensuring visitor access in a manner that protects the resources as well as the quality of the visitor experience.

The Historic/Domestic Area

The historic/domestic area is the primary place where visitors can learn about domestic life and the finance of whaling. The visitor will be offered a museum experience including both guided and self-guiding tours. There are also opportunities to attend small events and concerts in the gardens, and to learn about horticulture and gardening. This area offers a peaceful environment and would rarely be

crowded. The area presents the visitor with a starting point from which to explore other parts of the County Street historic district.

Currently, during most visitor days the historic/domestic area appears to be a quiet, residential scene. The residential context and the character of the site would not support crowds in the same way that the historic/commercial area and the contemporary waterfront/maritime area would. However, small-scale events currently do and would continue to work well in the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum's garden area. The museum currently addresses carrying capacity by referring to local fire codes for public buildings. Like the institutions in the historic commercial area, the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum has a defined procedure for addressing large groups such as bus tours; this procedure ensures visitor access while protecting resources and the quality of the visitor experience.

The Gateway/Access Area

This area serves as the park's primary gateway. Visitors arriving by private vehicle are and would continue to be directed off the interstate highway onto the limited access highway (Route 18), and from there onto Elm Street and to visitor parking.

Partnerships

At New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, the National Park Service will build upon a solid and long-standing foundation of historic preservation, visitor programming, and research. The National Park Service acknowledges those institutions both old and new that contribute to this strong

foundation, and will work in collaboration with those institutions to maintain it. Because of the cooperative nature of this park, the actions proposed in this general management plan must involve collaboration between the National Park Service and its partners. To offer access to most resources and institutions associated with the social, economic, and environmental history of the whaling industry, and to ensure their preservation, the National Park Service will pursue a series of cooperative agreements. In accordance with the park's enabling legislation, the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service has the authority to enter into cooperative agreements with interested entities and organizations, to provide for the preservation, development, interpretation, and use of the park.² Any work supported by National Park Service funds or technical assistance must support the park's mission and goals and meet National Park Service policies for resource management, visitor services, and accountability.

In addition, the park's enabling legislation requires every federal dollar for cooperative programs involving education, interpretation, and visitor services be matched by four nonfederal dollars, while every federal dollar for construction requires one matching nonfederal dollar. The National Park Service is authorized to accept donations of property, services, and goods as the nonfederal match.

This approved general management plan (GMP) will be followed by a series of strategic and implementation plans that outline actions in greater detail. Specific roles and responsibilities for the National Park Service and its partners will be clearly defined in these implementation documents.

INTERPRETATION, EDUCATION, AND VISITOR SERVICES

Across ALL Visitor Experience Areas

Program Support

The National Park Service will support partners' sites in their efforts to develop, offer, and cosponsor educational and interpretive programs, publications, and exhibits that support the park's mission.

Park Staff

The National Park Service will employ educational and interpretive staff dedicated to providing leadership and support to park partners in the development and implementation of education and interpretive programming.

Comprehensive Interpretive Plan

The National Park Service will develop a parkwide, comprehensive interpretive plan that fosters links and coordination among institutions in terms of interpretive and educational programming, publications, exhibits, and visitor services.

Education Forum

The National Park Service will participate in education forums that assemble park partners on a regular basis to discuss cooperative strategies and coordinate activities related to the delivery of high-quality, curriculum-based educational programming.

Internet Access

The National Park Service will maintain an up-to-date park website with active links to websites belonging to its immediate partners and other sites (for example, National Park Service units and maritime museums), as appropriate.

Interpretive Waysides

Interpretive waysides are outdoor panels that can be freestanding or attached to an existing structure such as a kiosk. They include descriptive information about park resources such as historic structures, historic landscape, and natural features. The National Park Service will update and expand the parkwide system of interpretive waysides to ensure that all park themes are well represented and to maximize visitor opportunities for self-paced, self-guiding interpretive experiences.

Quality Assurance

The interpretive training program for park volunteers offered by the National Park Service and its partners will be augmented with a program of evaluation, audits, and mentoring to ensure that visitor service goals are met.

Wayfinding

Informational and wayfinding panels located at the Elm Street garage and other major visitor parking areas will direct visitors to the park visitor center and identify key sites associated with the park (such as the Whaling Museum and the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum). Similar panels may be installed at the local bus and train stations, marinas, ferry terminal, and the New Bedford Regional Airport.

The Historic District/Commercial

Visitor Experience Area

Maritime Demonstrations

With its park partners, the National Park Service will cosponsor demonstrations of historical maritime crafts and activities. Maritime demonstrations could include small craft construction, rope making, barrel making, and other similar activities. Other maritime activities could involve storytelling, music and other forms of live performance. The National Park Service will participate only in programs that support the park's mission and its themes.

Visitor Orientation Center

The old New Bedford Institution for Savings building located on the corner of North Second and William streets will continue to be the park's visitor orientation center. The building has been rehabilitated for visitor use and made wheelchair accessible. The visitor center will also house an orientation exhibit that introduces visitors to the park, its mission, and its many sites and programs. The visitor center will be clearly identified using signs, banners, and other markers, as necessary. The National Park Service will operate the visitor center year-round. The National Park Service's volunteers in the park (VIPs) will staff the visitor center and lead walking tours under the supervision of park staff.

Programming and Special Events

National Park Service rangers and volunteers will provide special park programs³ in concert with park partners for specific audiences, and will participate in special events. National Park Service rangers will also provide interpretive programs during peak visitor hours and would help coordinate

community-based programs (such as youth programs and elder hostels). National Park Service staff will work with park partners to develop and implement curriculum-based education programs for specific audiences. As stipulated by agency guidelines, National Park Service involvement in programs and special events must directly relate to park mission and themes.

Audiovisual Program

An audiovisual program presenting the story of New Bedford and the American whaling industry will be hosted by the New Bedford Whaling Museum. The program will be made available to visitors free of charge and will introduce them to the primary theme of the park. The National Park Service will support and participate in the development of the audiovisual program.

Program Space

A building within the park will be acquired by donation and redeveloped by the National Park Service or space could be leased, if pre-configured to meet National Park Service specifications. The National Park Service would use the building or leased space for community outreach and educational programming related to park themes. The space could be made available to park partners for park-related purposes. The first floor of the selected building could be retained as commercial/retail space in keeping with the historic character of the area. Ideally, such a building would be centrally located within the national historic landmark district and would contain sufficient space to accommodate the park's growing needs for program space. The Corson Block buildings could be considered for this purpose.

Artist-in-Residence Program

The National Park Service will work collaboratively with park partners to establish an artist-in-residence program. The program will be community based and will emphasize community outreach, particularly to city youth, and will embrace fine, literary, and performing arts that support the park's purpose and themes.

Temporary Exhibits

The National Park Service's Visitor Orientation Center will include space for temporary exhibits. With its park partners, the National Park Service could mount one or more temporary exhibits annually. These exhibits would highlight specific aspects of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park's primary themes and would complement exhibits and programs being sponsored by park partners and other park-related institutions.

The Historic District/Domestic Visitor Experience Area

The Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum

The museum will continue to operate as a historic house museum, interpreting the life and times of the three families who occupied the house. The garden will continue to be a venue for concerts and other small-scale outdoor public events.

Nathan and Polly Johnson House

Located on Seventh Street, the Nathan and Polly Johnson House is representative of a middle-class African-American merchant home and business during the whaling era. Furthermore, it is considered nationally significant for its association with

Frederick Douglass. The National Park Service will seek a legislative change giving New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park the authority to assist in the interpretation and preservation of this property, similar to the park's relationship with the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum. The National Park Service will support the creation of interpretive waysides describing the history and use of the Johnson House. The site is a national historic landmark.

The Contemporary Waterfront/Maritime Visitor Experience Areas

The New Bedford/Fairhaven Harbor Master Plan

The National Park Service will endorse activities related to educational services and amenities on the waterfront as proposed in the New Bedford/Fairhaven Harbor Master Plan. These activities include:

- Developing a center for visitor services, programs, and support for the schooner Ernestina, the official vessel of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, on the southwest corner of State Pier.
- Initiating cross-harbor water taxi and launch service between the New Bedford and Fairhaven central waterfronts, marinas, and other significant tourism destinations.
- Enhancing pedestrian and bike access to the waterfront, including the development of a pedestrian and bike network in all proposed infrastructure projects.

- Redesigning Route 18 to provide improved waterfront access, including substantially enhanced pedestrian access between downtown New Bedford and the waterfront.
- Undertaking a waterfront public access/open space study.

The Schooner Ernestina

When in port, the schooner Ernestina will continue to provide dockside interpretive and educational programs to park visitors. The schooner Ernestina will also continue to participate in special programs and events such as Summerfest, “Portraits of a Port” Summer Teacher Institute, and Maritime Heritage Days. The schooner Ernestina Commission will also offer programming at their land-based facility located on North Water Street in the historic district.

Waterfront Visitor Contact Station

The city of New Bedford will continue to manage the Wharfinger Building as a visitor contact station for the waterfront. In partnership with the city, the National Park Service will develop an exhibit for the Wharfinger Building, highlighting the building’s historic use as a fish auction house, and will assist in improving its restrooms and other visitor amenities. The National Park Service could assist in staffing the Wharfinger Building during peak visitor season.

Concerts and Special Events

The southwest corner of State Pier and Waterfront Park will provide a venue for concerts, special events, and maritime demonstrations offered by the National Park Service and its partners, when such

events are related to park themes. The National Park Service will participate in water-based educational programs that are related to park mission and themes.

The Bourne Counting House

At the Bourne Counting House, the National Park Service will work with private owners to obtain public access to the ground floor and to develop displays that interpret the history and function of the building in this new public space.

The Baker-Robinson Whale Oil Refinery

Located across MacArthur Drive from the Bourne Counting House, the Baker-Robinson Whale Oil Refinery building was part of a larger industrial complex, and is one of the few remaining examples of whale oil refineries in the United States. The National Park Service will seek a legislative change, giving New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park the authority to assist in the interpretation and preservation of this property, similar to the park’s relationship with the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum. The National Park Service will support the creation of interpretive waysides describing the history and use of the Baker-Robinson Whale Oil Refinery.

The Gateway/Access Visitor Experience Area

Primary Gateway

The intersection of Elm Street and Route 18 will continue to be the primary gateway for the park. Directional signage will continue to guide visitors to this entry point.

RESOURCE PROTECTION

The Built Environment

Project Review As an interested party, the National Park Service will engage in the review of projects occurring within or adjacent to the park boundary that are proposed by the city or park partners and that have an effect on park resources or the visitor experience.

Historic Resource Information Clearinghouse

The National Park Service will work with park partners to assemble existing information and identify research needs related to historic resources within the park. This assemblage of information might include Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Forms, measured drawings, records of previous preservation efforts within the park, and other information. The National Park Service will act as a clearinghouse for this information, making it available to site managers, National Park Service staff, and the general public.

Documentation

The National Park Service will prepare an up-to-date, comprehensive national register nomination for New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. The new nomination will solidify the defined period of significance and identify all the contributing structures associated with the historical park. Structures defined as contributing under this nomination may be considered “mission essential” structures for purposes of this plan.

Parameters for National Park

Service Involvement

The general management plan outlines parameters to guide National Park Service involvement in historic preservation in New Bedford. These parameters take the form of an established period of significance and priorities for historic structures and historic landscapes. The parameters were defined based on information gathered during the research phase of the planning process, and were refined after consulting with National Park Service staff and local agencies and preservation organizations.

Period of Significance According to the National Register of Historic Places, the period of significance is the span of time during which a property maintained the activities for which it attained the significance for which it meets the National Register criteria. New Bedford’s significance is derived from its association with America’s whaling industry. New Bedford’s period of significance spans from 1760 to 1920 and represents the “cradle to grave” history of the city’s role in the American whaling industry.

Historic Structures The National Park Service will help preserve and protect historic structures within the park according to the following priorities

Priority 1 – Those structures identified in the existing national historic landmark nomination or park enabling legislation (with the exception of the Ernestina).⁴

Priority 2 – Those structures constructed during the period of significance that support the park mission and are under immediate threat of loss. The loss of the structure must be deemed to significantly compromise the historic fabric of the park.⁵

Priority 3 – Those structures constructed during the period of significance that support the mission of the park and its primary interpretive themes and contribute to the historic fabric of the park.

Historic Landscapes The National Park Service will help preserve and protect historic landscapes within the park according to the following priorities.

Priority 1 – Those features that contribute to the overall streetscape and pattern of development that is characteristic of the historic district, including exemplary streetscapes such as Centre Street and Johnny Cake Hill.

Priority 2 – Important views from key locations within the park (for example, the view down William Street to Double Bank, or the views to water from Water Street).

Priority 3 – Paving Materials/Patterns (examples include cobble, Belgian block, bluestone, and granite).

Priority 4 – Other landscape elements (street furnishings, trees, fountains, public art, natural rock outcroppings, and other related elements).

Contemporary Landscape

The National Park Service recognizes contemporary initiatives to beautify the national historic landmark district and will work with city and local residents to ensure that the placement of trees and the style of street furnishings complement park resources and do not interfere with significant views, as described in the park's Cultural Landscape Report, Vol. 1.

Archeology

The National Park Service will encourage management and documentation of all archeological

resources that are associated with sites and structures within the park.

Ethnography

The National Park Service will provide support for the generation of a series of ethnohistories. Each report will highlight the historic and contemporary relationship that a particular group of people has had with the city's central waterfront and whaling history. A number of groups will be studied including but not limited to American Indians and African Americans, as well as immigrant communities from the Azores, Madeira, Cape Verde, and West Indies.

The Schooner Ernestina

In accordance with the park's enabling legislation, the National Park Service does not have the authority to provide funds for the preservation and maintenance of the schooner Ernestina. However, the park is not precluded from providing such technical assistance as research and preservation advice and may assist in the identification of alternative funding sources to support the maintenance and preservation of the vessel. The National Park Service will thus be available to provide such technical assistance to the schooner Ernestina.

Preservation Assistance

Working collaboratively with its park partners, historic preservation organizations, and land trusts, the National Park Service will actively seek the donation of preservation easements and other physical mechanisms to support preservation. Planning and historic preservation professionals will be on the park staff and will be available to advise and provide

technical assistance to park partners. The National Park Service will provide extensive technical support for design, historic preservation, and collections management in the context of the park.

The National Park Service will offer training for preservation, emphasizing restoration and maintenance techniques for staff at the park's partner institutions. The National Park Service will help the city update, publish, and distribute design guidelines for the historic district.

Building Restoration Fund

The National Park Service will establish a building restoration matching fund for "mission essential" buildings and landscape elements (for example, paving, street furnishings, and building facades). "Mission essential" buildings are those named in the park's enabling legislation or in the existing national historic landmark nomination form for the Waterfront Historic District. The funds will be made available through a competitive process and will require nonfederal matching funds. "Mission essential" landscape elements are those described as contributing features in the New Bedford Historic District Cultural Landscape Report, Volume I, 1998 and, when completed, the park's cultural landscape inventory.

The New Bedford Historical Commission

The National Park Service will seek appointment as a voting member of the New Bedford Historical Commission through the office of the mayor of New Bedford and the city council. Furthermore, the National Park Service will encourage the city to pursue expansion of the Massachusetts General Laws

(M.G.L.) Chapter 40C district so that it be made congruent with the park's boundary. This will enable the Historical Commission to act on preservation matters parkwide.⁶

Collections Management

Parameters for National Park Service Involvement

The general management plan outlines parameters to guide National Park Service involvement in the management of collections in New Bedford. These parameters take the form of priorities for collection management. The parameters are based on information gathered during the research phase of the planning process and were refined after consulting with National Park Service staff and local agencies and institutions currently managing collections.

Priorities For Collections All collections identified in the scope of collections and the overview of park related collections support the mission of the park.⁷ Priorities for supporting the protection and use of these collections emphasize the following.

Priority 1 – Accessibility Collections should be well documented and cataloged. Space should be available to enable researchers to make use of the collections on-site. Wherever possible the facilities where collections are stored should be made wheelchair accessible.

Priority 2 – Climate controlled storage Collections should be housed in facilities with appropriate environmental controls (including controls for heat, humidity, light, and other parameters) in order to minimize deterioration of the collection.

Priority 3 – Conservation needs Significant museum and archival artifacts that require restoration work should be identified and conserved.

Collections Management Plan

The National Park Service will work with partners to develop a collections management plan that fosters coordination among institutions, reinforces links among park-related collections, and enhances protection of and access to such collections. Within the context of completing the collections management plan, a survey and assessment of existing collection storage facilities will be undertaken. In preparation for the collections management plan, a clear statement of the scope of collections for each partnering institution will be prepared. Each collections statement will define the institutional mission, describe the scale and breadth of current collections, and outline guidelines for future acquisition.

Collections Management Forum

The National Park Service will convene and facilitate a collections management forum that will assemble park partners on a regular basis to discuss cooperative strategies and coordinate activities related to the care and use of park-related collections.

Collections Offered to the Park

Donations of artifacts, archeological materials, or archival documents offered to New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park will be referred to the appropriate local institution. With the exception of those items that must be retained by the National Park Service in accordance with federal law (archeological artifacts found on park-owned land, for example) and those items associated with the historic resources information clearinghouse, the park will not hold collections.

NPS Documents

The park will maintain documents generated by the National Park Service, archeological artifacts, and any other items that must be retained by the park as required by federal law, as well as any items associated with the historic resources information clearinghouse. Otherwise, as previously indicated, the National Park Service will not own or manage collections.

Collections Management Assistance

The National Park Service will provide technical and financial assistance to expand and protect collections that support the park's mission and interpretive themes. A collection management professional will be on the park staff and will be available to advise organizations needing help with their park-related collections.

Universal Finding Aid

The National Park Service will support the development of a universal finding aid that will enhance access to the park-related collections of all participating institutions. A universal finding aid is a paper or digital document that organizes information about various museum holdings in a manner that makes it easier for the public to gain access and use the collections associated with the park. The universal finding aid will include information on collections housed at all of the park-related sites. The finding aid could take a number of forms, including a published catalog, a CD-ROM, or a card catalog housed at a local institution.

Private Collections

Within the greater New Bedford area, a number of private individuals possess significant artifacts, documents, photographs, and other materials related to the city's whaling era. Although these items have been cherished and cared for by their owners, it would be beneficial to formally inventory and document them, so that their importance is acknowledged and their future protection is secured. By making technical assistance and limited funding available for these purposes, the National Park Service will support the identification and documentation of private collections that are relevant to park themes and have yet to be housed and formally organized.

Park Operations and Administration

Alaska Liaison

A cultural resource management specialist position, jointly funded by New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park and the Alaska Region, will be duty stationed in Alaska and will act as a point of contact with the Inupiat Heritage Center and between the historical park and the Alaska Region. This person will coordinate funding requests, assist in planning and implementing collaborative projects, including training and interpretive and educational programming, and coordinate technical assistance requests.

Maintenance

The National Park Service will contract out janitorial and routine maintenance functions for park-owned facilities.

Park Offices

The park's administrative offices will be located in the old New Bedford Institution for Savings building and the Custom House or other facilities. The Custom House space will continue to be shared with the US Customs Service.

Friends Group

Currently, there is no group that advocates solely for the interests of the park. A friends group will be established to assist the park in meeting programming and visitor services goals.

Provision of Technical Assistance

Park staff will be comprised of National Park Service professionals in a variety of fields (including planning, interpretation, and historic preservation); they will share expertise with partners and support park operations. To accommodate requests for technical assistance, professional staff at the national historical park will be available to offer advice and direction on daily resource management and visitor programming matters. Larger-scale projects will be contracted through National Park Service technical centers (for example, the Northeast Museum Services Center or the Building Conservation Branch of the Northeast Cultural Resources Center), or through existing indefinite quantities contracts with private sector architectural and engineering firms.

Park Offices

In addition to the Custom House and the old New Bedford Institution for Savings building, office space could be located in the same building within the historic district that is selected for use as classroom and program space.

Parking, Circulation, and Access

Route 18 Redesign

The National Park Service will actively participate in the redesign of Route 18 and will make technical assistance available in certain disciplines (such as archeology and viewshed analysis).

Waterfront Pedestrian Access

The National Park Service will endorse the pedestrian access proposals for the central waterfront as described in the New Bedford/Fairhaven Harbor Master Plan. Some of these proposals involve expanding public access to open space on both sides of the harbor and formalizing pedestrian and bicycle routes that will allow for circumnavigating the entire harbor area.

Parkwide Pedestrian Routes

The National Park Service will work with the city of New Bedford and other park partners to improve and expand existing pedestrian routes along the waterfront and through the historic district, and will link the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum to the core of the park. Existing routes that will be considered include the “Nautical Mile” and self-guiding architectural tour routes. In addition, the existing system of wayfinding markers will be updated.

Visitor Parking Plan

The National Park Service and the city of New Bedford will undertake the development of hospital-ity-oriented parking plan that will emphasize clearly designated and easily accessible parking in garages, on streets, and in surface lots. The plan will also consider the appropriate location of bus drop-off and

pick-up points, parking for buses and other large vehicles, and directional and parking signage.

Parking Restrictions

In order to better represent exemplary streetscapes within the park boundary, the National Park Service will work with the city and park partners to pursue limiting or prohibiting parking on such streets as Johnny Cake Hill or Centre Street during daytime hours.

Shuttle Bus Service

The National Park Service will work with the city of New Bedford to expand shuttle bus service to provide public transportation between parking areas and a number of downtown destinations—including the historic district—and to provide service to the waterfront as well as to the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum during the visitor season.

Intermodal Transportation

Primarily through the use of informational materials, the National Park Service will encourage linking intermodal transportation sites such as the bus station, proposed train stations, and water taxis within the city and on the harbor to the park.

Wheelchair Accessibility

The National Park Service will provide necessary assistance to make key visitor destinations within the historical park wheelchair accessible. This assistance could potentially extend from the initial site planning phase through construction, given the availability of funds and the importance of the project relative to the mission of the park.

Alaska

The story of Yankee whaling in the western Arctic is one of the most dramatic tales of sudden economic and cultural change in American history. Alaska Inupiat played a role in helping Yankee whalers survive the vicissitudes of Arctic life while, at the same time, the Yankee whalers introduced a new way of life to the Inupiaq people.

The New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park's enabling legislation affiliates the Inupiat Heritage Center in Barrow, Alaska with the park to ensure that the contributions of Alaska Natives to the history of whaling is fully recognized. It directs the Secretary to provide financial and other assistance to the center.

The Inupiat Heritage Center will work cooperatively with the National Park Service's Alaska Regional Office to seek funding through the Department of Interior's budget to facilitate the intent of the enabling legislation. The Alaska Regional Office, the park, and its local partners will work with the center in collaboration and partnership to accomplish mutual goals in the areas of interpretive and educational programming, as well as research and documentation of people, materials, and activities associated with both historical and contemporary whaling on Alaska's North Slope.

Underground Railroad

New Bedford played an important role on the Underground Railroad and would therefore be eligible for support, as it is made available, under the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act of 1998. This act authorizes the National Park Service to coordinate and facilitate federal and

nonfederal activities to commemorate, honor, and interpret the history of the Underground Railroad, its significance as a crucial element in the evolution of the national civil rights movement, and its relevance in fostering the spirit of racial harmony and national reconciliation. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park is an appropriate point of contact for access to national Underground Railroad program funds and technical assistance.

Legislation

The National Park Service will pursue legislative authorization to assist in the interpretation and preservation of the Baker-Robinson Oil Refinery and the Nathan and Polly Johnson House, similar to the park's relationship with the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum. The park's enabling legislation will need to be changed to reflect the park's expanded resource protection responsibilities, as described in this plan. The park's development ceiling^s of \$2 million will have to be raised by approximately \$6 million to pursue funds necessary to implement this plan.

Costs

Annual operating costs associated with the plan are estimated to be approximately \$1.4 million. Costs for resource-based research are estimated to be approximately \$900,000; costs for planning would be about \$300,000; costs for exhibits and interpretive media would be about \$1.1 million; costs for the construction program for the park would be about \$7 million. These figures represent 100 percent of the estimated project costs and do not account for the required federal/nonfederal matches. Under this

plan, staff size would expand to include up to 16.5 full-time equivalents (FTE) on staff. Most of these positions would be filled by specialists in the following disciplines: resource management, planning, historic preservation, administration and accountability, and visitor programming. See the detailed cost estimate given in Appendix C.

- 1 The vision statement was drafted with extensive input from community representatives at the park's Vision, Mission, and Goals workshop in November, 1997.
- 2 State and local liability laws continue to apply within the boundary of the national historical park and are not in anyway enhanced or diminished by the presence of the park.
- 3 Special park programs would be offered in addition to daily park or museum programs and would often be offered in conjunction with a larger event or celebration,(such as Thursday Evenings in the Park or the Maritime Heritage Festival).
- 4 The following buildings are named in New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park's enabling legislation or the National Historic Landmark nomination papers for the Bedford Landing (Waterfront) Historic District: the New Bedford Institution for Savings, the Custom House, the Benjamin Rodman House, the New Bedford Whaling Museum Complex, the Seamen's Bethel, Mariners' Home,the Double Bank,the Rodman Candleworks,the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum, the Wharf-finger Building, and the Bourne Counting House. In accordance with the park's enabling legislation, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park cannot provide preservation, maintenance, or construction monies for the schooner Ernestina. Additional sites could be identified as "mission essential"upon completion of an up-to-date, comprehensive national register nomination for the national historical park.

5 Currently, the Corson Block,located on the corner of William and Bethel streets, is an example of such a building. The 1877 structure was historically associated with maritime commerce and was recently gutted by a 1997 fire. The building occupies a prominent location within the park; its loss would have a tremendous impact on the historic fabric of the district.

6 Prior to the publication of the final plan and with the concurrence of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the city of New Bedford passed a local ordinance to appoint a representative of the National Park Service to the commission and to make the boundaries of the Chapter 40C district congruent with the park boundaries.

7 The following institutions are addressed in the collections management documents: the New Bedford Whaling Museum, the New Bedford Free Public Library, the Schooner Ernestina Commission, the Waterfront Historic Area League (WHALE), the New Bedford Historical Society, and the New Bedford Preservation Society.

8 A development ceiling is determined by a park's establishing legislation and is a predetermined limit placed on the type and total cost of construction.